

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:20
ANSWERED ON:19.11.2001
SETTING UP OF GRAIN BANK FOR VILLAGERS
PUTTASWAMY GOWDA;SAHIB SINGH VERMA

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government have decided to set up grain banks in all the tribal villages at a cost of Rs.1100 crores;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the total number of villages likely to be covered under this programme alongwith the funds likely to be provided, State-wise;
- (d) whether the Government have taken some concrete measures to boost crop diversification and food exports; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.20 DUE FOR REPLY ON 19TH NOVEMBER, 2001.

(a) to (e): The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation organized a Conference of Chief Ministers under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister on 21st May, 2001, at New Delhi to discuss issues relating to the WTO Agreement on Agriculture and Food Management. While concluding the proceedings of the Conference, the Prime Minister announced the constitution of a Standing Committee of Union Ministers and Chief Ministers on Food Management and Agriculture Exports to consider issues concerning agricultural strategies, food management and promotion of agricultural exports in the wake of WTO Agreement on Agriculture. During the third meeting, held on 31st October, 2001 at New Delhi, the Standing Committee recommended implementation of an expanded Grain Bank Scheme. It was felt that the Scheme should be extended to all types of calamities and that all BPL families in identified areas should be covered. During the first phase, the scheme is proposed to be extended to all Tribal villages and will cost about Rs. 1100 crore. With a view to ensuring recovery of grain loans from beneficiaries, the Scheme will be supplemented by the Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana for providing wage employment.

The Standing Committee has made important suggestions for boosting crop diversification and agriculture exports. The Committee agreed that Minimum Support Price (MSP) is a very important tool and should be rationalized to facilitate diversification, particularly towards oilseeds and pulses. The Committee emphasized integration of livestock, fisheries and crops for efficient utilization of farm resources as well as providing additional returns to farmers. The Committee stressed the need to promote exports of agricultural products by way of enhancing the quality and value of such products in order to increase their competitiveness. Quantitative and other restrictions on exports of agricultural products should be progressively removed. Government is already in the process of removing restrictions on exports of rice, wheat and wheat products, grains, butter and pulses. The concerned Departments and Ministries will take further necessary action for implementation of the recommendations of the Standing Committee.